An-Nisaa'

Lajna Imāillāh Canada

Volume: 30 May to August 2018 Issue:2

اَلْحَيَآءُ خَيْرٌ كُلُّهٗ

Modesty is all good

(Sahīh Muslim)

Sayyidul-Istighfār
(Best Prayer for Seeking Forgiveness)

Ḥazrat Buraidah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] said that whosoever recites this prayer morning or evening and dies on that day or that night he will enter heaven.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَنْتَ رَبِّيْ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ ، خَلَقْتَنِيْ ، وَاَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَاَنَا عَلٰى عَهْدِكَ وَ
وَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ ، اَبُوْءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ
عَلَيَّ ، وَاَبُوْءُ لَكَ بِذَنْبِيْ ، فَاغْفِرْ لِيْ فَاِنَّهٗ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ ـ

O *Allāh*, You are my Lord, there is none worthy of worship except You. You created me and I am Your servant. And I am steadfast in Your covenant and Your promise to the best of my capability. I seek refuge in You from the evil effects of my deeds. I acknowledge Your blessings and favours. I confess my sins, so You forgive me, as there is none except You who forgives sins.

Source: Treasure House of Prayers, page 98, available online at https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Treasure-House-of-Prayers.pdf

IN THE NAME OF ALLāH, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE EVER MERCIFUL!

Lajna Imāillāh Canada's

An-Nisaa'

A magazine for the moral and spiritual training of Lajna Imāillāh Canada

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May to August 2018

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From the Holy Qur'ān

The English translation of the Arabic verses is rendered by Maulvi Sher Ali Sāhib[ra].

وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ
فُرُوْجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِيْنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ اِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا
وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلٰى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِيْنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ
اِلَّا لِبُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ اَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اَبْنَآئِهِنَّ اَوْ
اَبْنَآءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ اَوْ بَنِيْ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ اَوْ بَنِيْ
اَخَوَاتِهِنَّ اَوْ نِسَآئِهِنَّ اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُنَّ اَوِ التَّابِعِيْنَ
غَيْرِ اُولِي الْاِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ اَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ
يَظْهَرُوْا عَلٰى عَوْرٰتِ النِّسَآءِ ۪ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِاَرْجُلِهِنَّ
لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِيْنَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ ؕ وَتُوْبُوْا اِلَى اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا
اَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝ (سورہ النور: آیت32)

And say to the believing women that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts, and that they disclose not their natural and artificial beauty except that which is apparent thereof, and that they draw their head-coverings over their bosoms, and that they disclose not their beauty save to their husbands, or to their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands or their sons or the sons of their husbands or their brothers, or the sons of their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, or their women, or what their right hands possess, or such of male attendants as have no sexual appetite, or young children who have no knowledge of the hidden parts of women. And they strike not their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may become known. And turn ye to Allāh all together, O believers, that you may succeed. (24:32)

Ahādīth: Sayings of the Holy Prophet[sa]

Modesty

Imran ibn Husain[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] said: Modesty only results in good (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] said: Faith has more than sixty or seventy elements, the greatest of them is the affirmation: There is none worthy of worship save Allāh; and the least of them is removal from path of that which causes inconvenience. Modesty is also an element of faith (Bukhārī and Muslim).

The Holy Prophet[sa] is reported to have said: "Beware! Avoid sitting by the road sides.' The people said, 'O Messenger of Allāh! We cannot avoid sitting there as we have discussions there.' The Prophet said, 'If you insist on sitting there, then give the roads their rights.' The people asked, 'What are the rights of the road?' He said, 'Lowering your gaze, refraining from harming others, returning greetings, and enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil." (Bukhārī)

Abu Sa`id Khudri relates that the Holy Prophet[sa] was more modest than a virgin behind her veil and that when something displeased him we could perceive it from his face (Bukhārī and Muslim).

A Note from the Editor

A righteous woman is always looking for ways to please her Lord; which includes fulfilling all His commandments to the best of her abilities. The Promised Messiah[as] said in his book, "Noah's Ark":

> "So beware and do not take a single step contrary to the teaching of God and the guidance of the Qur'ān. I tell you truly that anyone who disregards even a small injunction of the seven hundred commandments of the Qur'ān, shuts upon himself the door of salvation." (Noah's Ark—An Invitation to Faith; pg. 44)

Elaborating on the same subject, Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh V[aa] said, while delivering the concluding address at the 36th Annual Ijtimā' of Lajna Imāillāh UK on October 26, 2014:

> "Always remember that God has not given a single command without reason or purpose. Every command of Allāh is a means of benefit to the individual and to the society. Allāh's commands are a means of protection from the many dangers and obstacles that are placed in front of us in this life, and are also a means of making sure we attain the very best rewards and blessings in the Hereafter."

Observing Purdah is one of the Qur'ānic commandments, which every righteous person should strive to adhere to. Regarding Purdah, Huzoor[aa] explained in his address that Purdah is a means of establishing the dignity and true freedom of a woman; as well as a source of physical and spiritual purity. Huzoor[aa] said:

> "Allāh's commandment in regards to Purdah must be kept in balance and moderation, as both sides have lurched towards extremism. In Europe and in the West generally, the society has become so free and immodest that adultery and indecency are now prevalent. On the other side, there are Muslims who are so fanatical that they even stop their women from ever leaving their homes." (Address to Lajna Imāillāh, Ijtimā' UK, October 26, 2014, accessed from www.khalifaofislam.com)

Due to societal and peer pressure, some may feel that Purdah is outdated and no longer required; but the fact of the matter is that as Qur'ān is for all ages, its commandments are also relevant and valid for all times. May Allāh enable us to understand and follow His teachings in the truest sense. Āmīn.

In this issue of An-Nisaa', we have focused on the theme of 'modesty'. As such, various articles on this topic are included along with Qur'ānic verses, Ahadīth, extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah[as] and an address of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīhi[aa]. I hope and pray that you will find this issue useful and it will spiritually reinvigorate you. Āmīn.

The An-Nisaa' team would like to thank the following members for submitting their articles (please accept apology for any missed name). Due to shortage of space, not all could be published. These articles may be included in the future: Aisha Ahmad, Rida Ahmed (Saskatoon North), Hira Jamal (Brampton McVean), Fary Shah (Saskatoon North), Sana Khan (Saskatoon North), Dr. Sabahat Ahmed Noreen, Sidra Ahmed (Edmonton West), Labiba Bajwa, Maria Ejaz Khan (Edmonton West), Naila Haleem (Calary NW), Wajeeha Saeed (Mississauga South) — JazakAllāh, AhsanalJaza!

Sadiqa Hifsa

Spiritual Treasures from the Writings of the Promised Messiah[as]

The following excerpts are taken from The Essence of Islām: Volume III, pg. 327—333 (available online at www.alislam.org/books); a compilation of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah[as], translated into English by Hazrat Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra] and revised by Munawar Ahmad Sa`eed .

THE VEIL

Today the veil is under attack, but the critics do not know that the Islāmic veil does not mean imprisonment; rather it is a barrier which seeks to restrict the free mixing of men and women. The veil will protect them from stumbling.

Wisdom behind the System of Veil

A fair-minded person will appreciate that the free mixing of men and women and their going about together would expose them to the risk of succumbing to the flare of their emotions. It has been observed that some people see no harm in a man and woman being alone together behind closed doors. This is considered civilized behaviour. To avoid such untoward situations from arising, the Law Giver of Islām has forbidden all such acts as might prove to be a temptation for anyone.

In a situation of this kind where a man and a woman, whom the law does not allow to meet thus, happen to meet privately, Satan becomes the third member of this party. Imagine the harm that is being done in Europe in consequence of such reckless freedom. In certain parts of Europe a life of shameless promiscuity is being led which is the end product of such thinking. If you want to save a trust, you have to stand guard over it. But if you are not watchful, then remember that despite the people being ostensibly nice, the trust will definitely be violated. Islāmic teaching in this behalf safeguards social life against unlawful indulgence by keeping men and women apart. Free mixing leads to the kind of destruction of family life and frequent suicides that have become common in Europe. That some women, who otherwise belong to noble families adopt the ways of prostitutes, is the direct result of the prevailing freedom. [Malfūzāt, vol. 5, p. 33]

The Islāmic system of the veil does not at all require women to be shut up as in a prison. What the Holy Qur'ān directs is that women should avoid displaying their beauty and should not look at strange men. Those women who have to go out in order to fulfil their responsibilities may do so, but they must guard their glances. [Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 430]

However much the Aryas may dislike the Muslims and be averse to Islāmic teachings, I would earnestly request them not to do away with the veil completely, as the resulting evils will make themselves felt sooner or later. Any intelligent person will appreciate that a large portion of humanity is governed by natural desires and, under the sway of the baser self, pays no heed to

Divine chastisement. At the sight of young and beautiful women most men can't help but stare. Women too do not hesitate to stare at strangers. Such unrestricted freedom will result in the kind of situation prevalent in Europe today. When people become truly purified and shed their baser appetites, and get rid of the Satanic spirit and when they have the fear of God in their eyes, and when they become fully conscious of the majesty of God, and they bring about a transformation and adorn the robes of Taqwa, only then will they have the right to do what they like; for then they will be like pawns in God's hands and, in a manner of speaking, they will cease to be males, their eyes will become oblivious to the sight of women and to such evil thoughts. But dear ones, may God direct your hearts, time is not right for this. If you usher in freedom today, you will sow a poisonous seed in your culture. These are difficult times. Even if it was not needed before, the veil is essential now, because this is the last era of mankind, and the earth is full of vice, debauchery and drunkenness. Hearts are filled with atheism and are devoid of respect for Divine commandments. Tongues are so loquacious and lectures are loaded with logic and philosophy, but the hearts are empty of spirituality. At such a time it would be a folly to expose your helpless sheep to the mercy of wolves. [Lecture Lahore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 173-174]

Many people urge the adoption of permissiveness like that prevalent in Europe, but this would be most unwise. Such unbridled freedom of sexes is the root of all immorality. Look at the moral situation in countries that have adopted this freedom. If freedom of sexes has helped increase their chastity and virtue, we will readily confess that we were mistaken. But it is crystal clear that when men and women are young, and have the licence to mix freely, their relationship will be most dangerous. It is but human to exchange glances and be overwhelmed by lustful desires. As there is intemperance and vice, despite the observance of the veil, it may be imagined what the situation will be like in case of unrestricted freedom. Look at men, how unbridled their behaviour is! They have neither fear of God nor faith in the hereafter. They only worship mundane pleasures. It is necessary therefore, that before granting such freedom as is being advocated, the moral condition of men should be improved and rectified. After men have developed enough self-temperance to restrain control their passions, you may consider whether the veil is necessary or not. To insist upon unrestricted freedom in the present circumstances would be like putting sheep at the mercy of lions. What ails our people that they do not reflect upon the consequences of things? Let them at least take counsel with their consciences whether the condition of men is so much improved that women may go about among them unveiled. The Holy Qur'ān, which lays down appropriate directions consistent with the natural desires and weaknesses of men, adopts an excellent position in this regard:

'Tell the believing men to restrain their looks and to guard their private parts. This is the act through which they will attain purification….'(23:31)

The Islāmic injunction that men and women should both restrain themselves in certain ways, aims at safeguarding them against slipping and stumbling; for, in the early stages human beings are inclined towards vice, and, at the slightest provocation, fall upon it as a starving person falls on delicious food. It is every one's duty to safeguard himself. [Malfūzāt, vol. 7, pp. 134-136]

Address of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh Vaa

Veil is an Islāmic Commandment

English rendering of an address by the Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya community, Mirza Masroor Ahmad, given at the Annual Lajna Imāillāh UK 2006 Ijtimā' (gathering) rendered into English by Shermeen Butt

Source: Review of Religions; January 2007, page 22
(http://www.reviewofreligions.org/date/2007/01/)

Today you have gathered here to hold your Ijtimā', today being its concluding day. These Ijtimā't are held for the purpose of providing an opportunity to Ahmadī ladies and girls to sit together for religious education and training by listening to educational and reformative speeches and instructions so that they may overcome their inner weaknesses. Younger and older girls may also get the opportunity, along with reformation, to further enhance their educational prowess by participating in various educational activities. Here a specific environment is provided in which they may identify more and better ways for their improvement and ponder over this matter. The future generation of a nation is never wasted nor does it ever experience decline when little girls, older girls and ladies gather at a location for the sole purpose of attending a purely religious and spiritual event in which they wish to participate in programmes and wish to spend time. In the current time, if any woman joins an assembly purely for the sake of Allāh, for these virtuous objectives, it is the Ahmadī woman. Therefore, always be mindful of this status of yours. Benefit from the educational and spiritual repast that you have obtained from here and are still obtaining; for in it lies your salvation, in it is the salvation of your next generations and in it is the honour and salvation of your families.

One should never be selfish and only concerned about oneself, one's own needs, and one's own feelings. Rather one should also be concerned about others and should make sacrifices for the needs of others. One should also consider the feelings of others and not just be aware of one's own honour, but instead always be mindful of the honour of one's family and the community. **One should also be always mindful that 'my' God is All-Seeing, Who watches over me at all times, that I have an All-Knowing, All-Aware God Whose deep sight has knowledge of my inner-most recesses. He is aware of everything about me and that is why nothing can stay hidden from Him. He has sight of everything and He is aware of everything, He is aware of every single moment of mine, be it overt or covert.** So when you declare that you are an Ahmadī Mus-

lim woman, you should always be mindful that you need to constantly focus on those matters that Allāh the Exalted conveyed to us through His beloved Prophet Muhammad[sa]. If ever, for any reason, we lapse in remembering these matters, then, whenever we are reminded of them, we should respond in the manner that God's good people do, about whom Allāh the Exalted states:

And those who, when they are reminded of the Signs of their Lord, fall not deaf and blind thereat. (25:74)

Certainly an Ahmadī woman, who has a core of goodness in her heart that has so far kept her firm on Ahmadiyyat and who is a personification of sincerity, who has a devotion for faith, who has a connection of love and affection with the Ahmadiyya Khilāfat, does not respond like the deaf and the blind when she is advised and counselled providing that she is a true Ahmadī – and this is what is expected of each Ahmadī when she is advised. So, as I have just said the outlook of each Ahmadī should be that she has to have focus on the matters that Allāh and His Prophet[sa] have taught us. In this is the identity and dignity of a believer. You make your pledge but always be mindful of this pledge. When the Holy Prophet[sa] took the pledge of allegiance from women, he included some additional matters for women in it compared to the pledge of allegiance by men. This is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān where it draws attention to avoid shirk (associating partners with Allāh) and to avoid wickedness; it draws attention towards moral training of children and is stated in this verse: **"...nor disobey thee in what is right…" (60:13)** There is no compulsion by Allāh the Exalted that the pledge should be taken from everyone. However, if they become Muslim then it is obligatory to abide by the conditions that are essential for coming into the fold of Islām. The Promised Messiah[as] also enjoined the same to women whenever taking the pledge of allegiance from them. It may cross someone's mind that 'we are free', especially in this environment, in today's society everywhere. Well, remember that you are free up to a limit. However, as far as the commandments of the *Shariah* are concerned, you are not free. If you have joined the community then you are bound, in any case, by the conditions, which are essential for an Ahmadī.

You see, in the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] when these ladies took the pledge of allegiance the society was totally free. It had no rule of law and exceeded the present age in vices. There was a lack of education; there were just a handful of people educated to an elementary level. There was no concept of the existence of God, they only knew idols. They had no idea of an All-Seeing, All-Knowing and All-Aware God. However, when they took the pledge of allegiance they brought about a revolution in their lives. Having come out of the darkness of ignorance and having gained knowledge, it was a woman who became the means of spreading the light of knowledge. Fulfilling all the requisites of Purdah (veil), matters of faith were taught to the high and the mighty and this seal of authority was attained from the Holy Prophet[sa] when he said that if you wish to acquire one half of the knowledge of faith, learn it from Ayesha. History mentions a lady by the name of Hazrat Khaula[ra] who set an example in the battlefield. While maintaining the sanctity of her Purdah (veil), she displayed great courage and bravery and freed her imprisoned brother from the Roman army. When Madinah was attacked by the disbelievers, the men dug up a ditch and thus protected the town. The women took the responsibility of the protection of the homes and when the Jews sent one of their men to spy and find out from which direction they could attack, no man came to con-

tend with this spy, but it was a woman who thrashed him, tied him up and threw him out. When the Muslims retreated in the Battle of Uhud, it was the women who played an exemplary role for the honour of the faith and for the love of the Holy Prophet[sa]. They were a model of sincerity. This bravery, courage, knowledge and sincerity was inspired by following the teaching of Islām and by practising it in their daily lives.

Therefore, always remember that if you selflessly adopt the teaching of your faith and try and follow all the commandments of Allāh, and concentrate on the worship of Allāh, honour of faith and sincerity will be inculcated in you and you will be free from all sorts of complexes. If you do not, then having submerged yourself in the razzle-dazzle of this world you will be lost like materialistic people. **So, just as the women of the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] brought about a revolution in themselves in that they became true Muslims, became *muminaat* (believing women), became *qanitaat* (obedient women), became *ta'ibaat* (women who are pure and chaste), became *abidaat* (devout women who worship Allāh); you too have to follow in their footsteps and in following in their footsteps you will have to adhere to the teaching of Islām.** If you do not adhere to it then you cannot be acknowledged as Muslims. If you do not strengthen your faith and do not protect yourself from the ills of the society then you cannot be called *muminaat* (believers). If you do not set high examples of obedience then you cannot be called *qanitaat* and if you do not focus on worship of God at all time, then you cannot be called *ta'ibaat* and *abidaat*. Therefore self-reflect on what you claim and what you actually do, carry out some self-assessment. Always have the objective of the creation of man in the forefront of your mind. Seeking of Allāh's pleasure should be your goal, set out great big targets and goals for yourself; identify those high objectives that you need to move towards. Once you have big targets in sight, you will truly endeavour to reach them.

Mothers should reflect on and assess themselves; in this way you can improve yourself as well as reform the next generation and can morally train them in a good manner. Today society is attacking Islām from all directions; today each Ahmadī little girl, each older girl and each woman needs to actively participate in its defence just as the women of earlier times did. Otherwise you will be held accountable over what you did about the task that was entrusted to you and as to your claims and your actions. Today Islām is being attacked with reference to women. The great issue that is being raised these days is that of Hijāb, scarf or Burqa. No matter what lengths men go to in order to explain and clarify why there is Purdah in Islām, no matter how many justifications they present, if anyone can rightly and correctly respond to this, it is a practising and pious Ahmadī woman. So, rather than being entangled in any sort of complex, convey this like a courageous Ahmadī woman to your surroundings and your society with your practice and in practical terms and rationale, saying that this Qur'ānic commandment is for our respect and is there to restore our esteem and is not an imprisonment. Note the state of these people! On the one hand they object against Islām that it compels and is harsh and on the other hand they themselves interfere in the personal matters of others. If a woman wishes to take a [head] scarf, wishes to wear Hijāb, what problem do they have? Currently the majority of Muslim women who have not accepted the Promised Messiah[as], with no practical remnants of faith, do not observe Purdah. Islām does not penalise them in any way, there is no law to punish them.

However, what right have people of other religions to opine that laws should be made against the observance of Purdah, of [head] scarf, head covering of those who do so in compliance with religious teaching? They may say in future that your attire is not quite right, do not wear shalwar and kameez, wear dresses or jeans or a long skirt or something like that, because we have an objection. Then there will be further objection and they could say wear shorter dresses, wear mini skirts and then finally go naked. These people have no right to trifle with the honour of any woman. It is you who have to respond to them in that. Who are they to interfere in the private matters of others? It should be conveyed to them that this too is a matter of denying one's freedom. One's clothes are a personal matter. Why are they trying to deny others' freedom of choice of clothes? However, as they are in government and have power and are in authority, they consider their unwarrantable and foolish point of view as great wisdom.

Be prepared! The Ahmadī woman has to maintain her honour as well as respond to each of such objections. Why do some women, despite being Ahmadīs, suffer from some complex or the other? Someone has informed that a woman said that if my daughter does not wear a scarf or wears jeans and other such clothes, do not say anything to her, she is most decent. How is she decent? She does not befriend boys, she is independent and knows what is good for her and what is not. Well, this is tantamount to damaging the moral training of children. Today if she does not befriend boys it could happen tomorrow. Today if she is not involved in any bad habit, then taking advantage of the freedom she has, she may get involved in something bad. If she is independent, knows what is good and bad for her and is independent in the matter that she does not have to observe Purdah (veil) according to Islāmic teaching then the Community too is free. The administration of the Community is also free. The Khalīfa of the day possesses the right, more than the rest, to expel from the Community those who are not going to obey the basic Qur'ānic commandment. Even when you join a worldly club, its membership has its own rules and regulations, and if these are not complied with, one's membership is terminated. Faith is a bond with God, it's a pledge of allegiance and if you act against its obvious and clear teaching and refuse to practise its teaching and if you or your daughter has the right not to observe Purdah (veil) then I too have the right, borne out of the right you have, to expel such noncompliant [people] from the Community. I would be doing so because of the commandment of Allāh and for this reason no one should have any complaint. **Here I advise the administration that the first step in this should be to review that no girl, no woman, who does not observe Purdah is appointed an office-holder.** If there is no Purdah–observing person in a majlis (branch) then such a majlis should be attached to a nearby neighbouring majlis or if it has someone who has little knowledge but observes Purdah, work should be entrusted to her. If there is no one who practises Purdah according to the Islāmic commandment – that is covering the head and the hair – and there is no neighbouring majlis then such a majlis should be closed down altogether. I am hopeful however that this frightening situation, the worst case scenario of which I have mentioned, would not exist anywhere, Insha'Allāh. With the grace of Allāh the Community has numerous ladies who excel in piety. If not among the older women then I notice that from among young women there are those who are free from hypocrisy, who do not indulge in any form of hypocrisy. There are some who have been affected by their home environment but there are many others who are firm on piety more than their elders. They try and observe Hijāb.

A programme has been made for MTA [Muslim Television Ahmadiyya] which has not been shown yet but I was watching the recording. In it one of our young women who is also a teacher said that as far as her job is concerned she covers her head in school because she does not wish to impart to the children that she has a hypocritical attitude and has double standards in that children would see her with a scarf outside and would wonder why she does not wear it in the school. In any case Purdah is an Islāmic commandment. In a discussion it was mentioned that one of our teachers of small children does not cover her head in school. That is fine, there is no harm where the children are young and there are women around, one does not have to cover one's head. However, it is possible that the young woman who said that she covers her head in the school as well has older children in the school. Anyway Purdah is an Islāmic commandment as well as the dignity of an Ahmadī woman and young woman and it is their sanctity as well. The sanctity of the Ahmadī woman is upheld through this and it is essential to maintain it.

However, remember that along with the scarf, the lower garment should also be loose because the commandment is that beauty not be displayed. Some young women outside the Community can be seen with the scarf, perhaps as a reaction to why they are prevented from wearing it, but they wear jeans and blouse. There is no point in this Purdah. This is hypocrisy. Purdah should be such that it is a covering and is dignified as well. I have been informed that some women were sitting somewhere and an office-holder said to the other that due to the current state of affairs they should now somewhat relax their Purdah, that so much severity should not be maintained. That is fine, you may relax, just as I said before, they may exercise their right and I will exercise my right. It cannot be that you go on exercising your right but tell me that I should not exercise my right. Regardless, I have to put into effect the commandment which Allāh the Exalted has given us in the Holy Qur'ān. If not, then the door is open, as I said, whoever wishes to leave, may do so. I do not understand; what is the reason for this complex, what is it, why is it? There are local British women. Elsewhere in Europe they become Ahmadīs as well. There are young women coming in the fold of the Community. They have started wearing the scarf and have started covering their heads. However, some among you suffer from an inferiority complex. A young English woman came to meet me who has recently become an Ahmadī. She would not have been used to the scarf or Hijāb, yet she was wearing a decent Hijāb. These people are accepting this beautiful teaching to put it in practice while some of our ladies are prone to inferiority complex. What more other than *Inna lillah* can be said on this! If someone entertains the thought that with this kind of strictness the Community will decrease, that people will start fleeing the Community, then remember that the Community will never decrease. Even if all such women leave it is Allāh's promise and in accordance to it He will grant new people. The British women who have joined are very sincere and in future too you will see that it will be from these people that love will exude. They will love Islām and Islāmic teachings. There are many others, like the one I just mentioned who met me yesterday, who are present here in front of me who have become Ahmadī of their own accord and have gone on to develop in their Ahmadiyyat. Here you have your Sadr Sāhiba. She too is not a Pakistani, she is German. But she observes Purdah, wears burqa and does not have any complex. So, as I said this lady is probably an office-holder who wants relaxation in Purdah.

"....No matter what lengths men go to in order to explain and clarify why there is Purdah in Islām, no matter how many justifications they present, if anyone can rightly and correctly respond to this, it is a practising and pious Ahmadī woman." — Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V[aa]

The fact is, the way I understand it is, basically she wishes to object to my being strict about Purdah. People like these who speak in ambiguous words, are hypocritical! Take hold of yourself.

To the new Ahmadīs who are coming in from these nations I say do not look up to those who are born into Ahmadiyyat yet do not want to abide by the Islāmic teaching. You should come forward and be models for these people. Come forward and spread the beauty and merits of Islām and Ahmadiyyat in this environment. Purdah and modesty has always been the teaching of each religion in each age. The Qur'ānic mention of the two women of Mosaic time who stood to one side and did not take their animals to drink water did so out of modesty in that they would go forward when men would be done.

Consider chastity a part of faith and that is what we have been taught. Christian women used to cover up in early days. They wore modest clothes. The Bible mentions the teaching of Purdah in many places. If today the Christians do not observe Purdah, and you are being influenced by them, well, they are forgetting their religion. If they remembered their faith and practised it then many evils which are now common among these people would end. Here I will give a few references from the Bible for the satisfaction of those who have a complex, you might have heard these before, but here they are again. 'A woman must not wear man's clothing nor a man wear woman's clothing for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this.' (Deutronomy Ch.22:Vs.5) 'Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain, but the woman who feareth the Lord shall be praised.' (Proverbs Ch.31:Vs.30) Then it is written: 'I also want women to dress modestly with decency and propriety not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes but with good deeds appropriate for women who profess to worship God.' (Timothy Ch.2:Vs.9-10) 'Any man who prays or prophesies with anything on his head, he disgraces his head, but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head. It is one and the same thing as having her head shaved. For if a woman will not veil herself then she should cut off her hair, but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. For a man ought not to have his head veiled since he is the image and reflection of God but woman is the reflection of man.' (Corinthians Ch.11:Vs.4-7) Whereas they object against Islām, incidentally it appears that it is they who consider man superior to woman for man has a status while woman has none. Anyway this was just a digression and cannot be discussed here now.

Having seen all this you should feel stronger. Derive greater strength in that you practice your teachings, which are the beautiful teachings of Islām, which connect one to the Living God. Whereas the Western world is bereft in terms of religion as it has forgotten the guidance of its religion, you should say to them that rather than speak against us, write articles about us, make laws, give statements, pay heed to yourself. Ra-

ther than uncover our heads which we cover happily, cover the heads of your women in accordance with your teachings. **I reiterate that rather than say that there should be relaxation in Purdah or to say to me in ambiguous words that I am strict in the matter of Purdah, get rid of your inferiority complex. Practise the teaching that God has given us. God has asked both men and women to avoid what is bad. The teaching is for men to restrain their looks first before enjoining women to do so. As compared to woman, man is bolder in nature.** That is why women are enjoined, that, although both are commanded to restrain their looks and guard their private parts, however, due to man's nature, it is better for you to cover your beauty so that you may be protected from the covetous eyes of men. Some people also raise the objection that earlier Khulafā' were not so strict in terms of Purdah. So I shall read our some references for your assurance.

The Promised Messiah[as] stated: 'As in Europe, people are urging for uncovering. However, most certainly it is not appropriate. This very freedom in women is the root of disobedience and indecency. Just consider the moral state of the countries that have allowed this kind of freedom. If due to their freedom and uncovering, their chastity and piety have increased then we shall concede that we are in the wrong. However, the matter is clear that if man and woman are young and there is freedom as well as an absence of Purdah, how dangerous their comingling would be. It is in human nature to look covetously and to be often overcome by passion of the self. If even within Purdah (veil), excesses happen and disobedience and indecencies committed, what would happen where there is freedom?'

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh II[ra] said in this regard: 'The Purdah according to the *Shariah* which is confirmed through the Holy Qur'ān is that a woman's hair, neck and face including the ears are covered. Purdah (veil) can be observed in compliance with this commandment, in accordance with local situation and clothing in different countries.' He then says: 'The entire part upwards of the joint of the hand is included in Purdah'. There is a most severe statement by Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh III[rh]. Listen to it attentively. During an address to Lajna in Norway he said:

'I ask those ladies who do not consider [observing] Purdah necessary here, what service have they rendered Islām by abandoning Purdah? Today some say that they should be allowed not to observe Purdah here. Next they will say that they should be allowed to bathe in the sea and lie on the sand unclothed. Next they will say that permission should be given to procreate before marriage. I shall say then be prepared to enter Hell. Put yourself right, before Allāh's wrath descends.' Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh IV[rh] said: 'I felt that in most parts of the world Purdah is disappearing as if it never existed. The resultant, most horrific destruction stands staring the nation in the face and there is no awareness of this destruction. Parents, with their misdeeds and negligence, are casting the next generation in a social hell and there is no one who cares for them. This situation is getting so critical in the entire world that I thought if the Ahmadīs do not take on the banner for the defence of Islām most promptly in their hands, the matter could exceed all limits.' He also said: 'Then there are ladies who have to go out but they go out with make-up on. What relevance has make-up with work/employment?' He said: **'Women think that in this world where Purdah is diminishing, if they go to their friends wearing burqa, they will say that they belong to old times, that they are crazy, have gone mad, for this is not the age for burqa! Men too are troubled by this although they forget that self-**

respect and respect from others is borne out of one's own character and clothes have no significance in respect of the world. If one has high character one's respect is generated and this respect should at first be generated in one's own self.' He also said: "Girls who are brought up here [this is a London sermon or address to Lajna] are mentally confused. They think that it is outdated to cover one's hair and is a huge backwardness. For this reason they move towards Allāh half-heartedly rather than wholeheartedly. In actual fact they are saying that 'O God accept us in this way alone. We have a dupatta (scarf) on but it is the way that Jews wear their skull cap (the kippah). Please accept this incomplete step in Your direction'. If you do every-thing for the sake of God then all this is inappropriate. Remember that the most attractive feature of a woman is her hair, in particular when it falls to the front. I have observed some girls pull their dupatta on the heads in a way that makes the hair fall to the front.' He also said: 'Consider whether you care more about Allāh the Exalted or people.'

So these were the statements by the Promised Messiah[as] and various Khulafā'. This notion has developed among certain people that such and such Khalīfa did not say so and such and such Khalīfa is saying it. The first thing is that you are making negative conjectures about Khulafā' without knowledge, implying that, God forbid, they did not want to implement Allāh's basic commandments. I have read out the statements of all the previous Khulafā'. Those of you who had this misunderstanding and suspicion in their minds, even if it was in the mind of just one person, it should be removed. Secondly, in certain situations one Khalīfa lays stress on one issue while the other on another issue. Therefore to maintain that an earlier Khalīfa said this about this matter and you should also do the same is restricting Khilāfat and is discourteous to it. It shows that you made your Bai'at (pledge) only under pressure of the society, parental pressure, pressure from husband or pressure from children and that it is not from your heart. If it was from your heart then the pledge you make to obey all good decisions would be apparent to you and you would never have cause to say why is this decision made and why is not that decision made.

Let me make it clear once again that if you wish to be associated with the Community of the Promised Messiah[as] – I particularly address those few people here who say such things – then adherence to the Holy Qur'ān and the clear commandments of the Holy Prophet[sa] will be required. Then, just as the Promised Messiah[as] said, duplicity will not do; either fear Allāh or fear people. Today it is the requisite of each Ahmadī woman's honour that rather than be scared of people in today's society when hatred against Islām is being generated, when mischief is afoot, she declares over and over again that no matter how many restrictions they may place, they cannot take away this beautiful teaching from our hearts, our faces and our practice. If you people are distancing yourselves from religion, are falling in the pit of destruction, we are not prepared to fall in this hell with you. Rather we pray that God saves humanity from its bad deeds and their dreadful conclusion. Come and join us and having joined us try and seek Allāh's pleasure by adhering to His commandments for therein is inner peace for you and the salvation of your future generations.

I hope that each honourable Ahmadī woman whose heart has ever entertained the slightest doubt about any Divine commandment shall claw it out of her heart and shall join in with the true *muslimaat, mominaat, qanitaat, ta'ibaat* and *abidaat*. May Allāh make it so. Āmīn

"Why I Choose to Wear Hijāb?"

By: Rubina Sheraz, Lloydminster

Every time I have a conversation with someone belonging to a different faith about Islām, I am ultimately asked these questions:

Why do I wear a Hijāb?

What will happen if I stop wearing it?

When was I told by my parents to start wearing it?

Here I would like to share with the readers my feelings and reasons for choosing to wear Hijāb.

To please Allāh Almighty

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh says, "And say to the believing women that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts, and that they disclose not their natural and artificial beauty except that which is apparent thereof, and that they draw their head-coverings over their bosoms, and that they disclose not their beauty save to their husbands, or to their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands or their sons or the sons of their husbands or their brothers, or the sons of their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, or their women, or what their right hands possess, or such of male attendants as have no sexual appetite, or young children who have no knowledge of the hidden parts of women. And they strike not their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may become known. And turn ye to Allāh all together, O believers, that you may succeed." (24:32)

The main reason I wear a Hijāb is because it is a commandment of Allāh, as made clear in the above reference. As a Muslim woman, I try my best to please Allāh Almighty by trying to follow every commandment.

To follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet[sa]

It is narrated from Hazrat Anas[ra] that the Messenger of Allāh[sa] said:

"Every religion has its distinct characteristic, and the distinct characteristic of Islām is modesty." (Bukhārī)

By wearing a Hijāb, I am following this teaching of the Holy Prophet[sa] to uphold modesty.

To follow the instructions of Khilāfat

As a Waqfe Nau, it is crucial for me to say '*Labbaik*' (Hear I am!) to all the advice and instructions I receive from our beloved Huzoor-e-Anwar[aa]. During his speech at Jalsa Salana Canada 2016, Huzoor[aa] reminded all Āmila and Lajna members to observe proper Purdah. I want to be among those who said *Labbaik* to my Khalīfa[aa] and observe proper Purdah according to his guidelines.

Exercising my right to choose

By covering up, I am exercising my basic human right to choose the veil.

If a woman has the right to show off her body,

then she must also have the right to cover it up.

Protecting my body from harmful elements

Along with spiritual benefits, the Hijāb provides health benefits as well.

Covering the head is one way to prevent heat lost during chilly winter months. Studies show that 40-60% of body heat is lost through the head, so those wearing head coverings are protected more than those who do not cover up during winter.

Covering up the body with a Hijāb and coat means you can protect yourself from the sun's harmful rays. Sun damage produces most of the skin changes that people commonly associate with aging. Long-term exposure to the ultraviolet radiation in sunlight is responsible for fine and coarse wrinkles, irregular pigmentation, brown and red spots, and the rough texture of sun-exposed skin.

Protection from unwanted attention

I was in Grade 9 when I realized that I should start wearing a Hijāb and a long coat. Afterwards, everywhere I went I felt a source of protection. It was all due to wearing a Hijāb, because it protects you from the unwanted gaze of men. This is when I understood the importance of the hadith, "Haya (modesty) does not bring anything except good." (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Safeguarding my beauty

As a Muslim woman, the Hijāb allows me to safeguard my beauty primarily for my husband. Wearing a Hijāb does not mean that we should always wear dull colours or keep the head covered at home. We should beautify ourselves for our husband in the same way that most pious and righteous women have done in the past.

To be judged for my abilities not appearance

I have heard numerous examples from girls who do not wear Hijāb, or simply do not understand the importance of it, that by wearing the Hijāb, they will be judged as being backwards or be denied opportunities to succeed. I politely disagree with these excuses. Even after wearing the Hijāb, I graduated as an Honor Roll student. When I started working, I received many opportunities to grow. It increased my faith that once we do something for Allāh, He will always hold your hand and guide you towards success. This is another reason I wear the Hijāb. It gives me an opportunity to prove myself and give people a chance to judge me by my abilities and not by my appearance.

To be an example for my daughter

Children are always taking notes in their little minds as to what they observe, and imitate those around them. You can advise them to clean their room many times but they may not listen. However, if you set an example by cleaning your room daily, they will likely start cleaning their own rooms without constant reminders.

Similarly, I want set an example for my daughter to cover her head. I don't want her to wear the Hijāb just because I said so, but because she understands for herself that a Muslim woman can pursue her career while observing her faith to the fullest. Insha'Allāh!

Once you do something for Allāh's sake, He will always hold your hand and guide you towards success.

Modesty - the Answer to Society's Declining Morality

By: Saadia Mahdi, Peace Village East

Allāh the Almighty in His Infinite Wisdom says in the Holy Qur'ān,

> Surely, men who submit themselves *to God* and women who submit themselves *to Him*, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast *in their faith* and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard *their chastity*, and men who remember Allāh much and women who remember *Him* — Allāh has prepared for *all of* them forgiveness and a great reward. (33:36)

While modesty is defined as behavior or appearance intended to avoid impropriety or indecency, current fashion trends and pop culture promote the exact opposite. Media portrays revealing clothing and women dressed in indecent clothing as the only acceptable norm. Television shows and films depict characters indulging in promiscuous and indecent behaviour.

Things were a lot different when I was younger. People who dressed provocatively were considered rebels and received backlash from the majority. In schools, dress codes were stricter and anything that seemed too '*risque*' would quickly be taken care of by teachers/authority figures. TV programs were very different as well, as most shows were meant to be watched with the whole family. Shows deemed inappropriate for younger audience turned on late at night to avoid children accidentally watching them. Society as a whole seemed to be practicing a somewhat basic level of modesty.

So what happened? How did it become so *uncool* to be modest? Some people blame the media, music industry, or Hollywood but my point is not to focus on *why* this shift occurred, but that it did, and we need to recognize it and protect ourselves and our future generations so that we can live in this society but still practice the Islāmic value of modesty.

One can practice modesty through one's actions, dress and engaging with others in a way that says, I am a pious and chaste person, and I don't engage in immodest behaviour. It should tell others that your values are such that you prioritize your spirituality over societal norms.

An incident occurred that taught me a lot about modesty. I had gone with my cousin to a Catholic High School to do a presentation on Islām. Afterwards, the teacher had approached us to have a quick discussion. He told us that he had enjoyed the presentation but the only thing he couldn't wrap his head around was the Islāmic injunction of purdah, and why were women

forced to dress in such a manner. We proceeded to explain that this form of dressing was a form of protection for us, and that it was not a tool of oppression but a conscious choice that one made when one truly understood the wisdom behind it. However, he was persistent in his defence of women who were subjugated at the hands of men. I then asked him how it was okay for a nun to cover her head and not okay for a Muslim woman? All of a sudden he became angered and upset. He was offended as they had dedicated themselves to God and how could I use them as an example to defend Muslim women! His tone completely changed so I cut it short and we proceeded to pack up our stuff to leave.

When I was replaying the entire conversation in my mind to see what went wrong, I realized something beautiful. As a catholic, it was his belief that only nuns were pious enough to dedicate themselves to live a chaste life, devoted to follow God's commandments. However, Islām has given every woman this right. That all of us, are precious and can live a chaste life, dedicated to God. When a Muslim woman covers her body and acts modestly, she understands her true purpose, which is to live a life dedicated to Allāh and live according to His commandments. Islām teaches us that every person can live a chaste and modest life by following Qur'ānic commandments. Chastity and piety is not just for priests and nuns, but for everyone, and that this will transform society as a pure and safe place for all. I am thankful for these beautiful Islāmic teachings that understand human behaviour and work to prevent problems before they arise, rather than deal with the consequences after.

In our so-called 'liberated' society today, women think they are free to act and dress as they wish, and yet they are constantly being enslaved by fashion and beauty standards that dictate how they should look. They think they are free because they can have physical relationships with whoever they want and even have children without the sacred bonds of marriage. The bonds that they run away from are actually there to protect them, to give them and their children rights and protect them from being used and abused. In an attempt to be free, they have created oppression and cruelty. Islām has a cure for all these spiritual diseases. Modesty and chastity are important because they create a barrier that is imperative to protect both men and women. It establishes structure and parameters for behaviour, and makes everyone responsible for their actions. While societal norms will constantly be changing, we need to adhere to the Islāmic norms and stay firm on modesty. That is the only way that we can protect ourselves and our future generations from the ills of this culture.

How to Instill Modesty in Our Children

If we understand that the society we live in does not value modesty, then we must be aware that it is continuously *promoting* immodest behaviour to our children. Only then can we consciously work to safeguard ourselves and children from it. Parents should talk to children about appropriate clothing, digital media content they consume, and for older children, the topic of dating.

Children should be taught the importance of wearing appropriate clothing from a young age. If girls are used to wearing long and loose-fitting shirts, that cover their bodies, from a young age then they will likely cover themselves as they grow up. *Hayaa* is also mimicked. If they see you dressing a certain way, they will follow your example. However, this does not mean that you don't need to sit with them and explain the rea-

soning behind it and its importance. Another topic to discuss with children involves their media consumption. Unfortunately, almost all popular music these days promotes promiscuous behaviour, dating, drugs, etc. Kids will listen to this music and be influenced by the lyrics and hidden messages. The music videos are especially inappropriate and available for all to watch on YouTube etc. Parents should be aware of what their children are doing while they are using tablets or computers and especially when they have headphones on.

It cannot be emphasized enough to make sure that your children are also watching age appropriate shows. Most dramas are meant for adults and are about topics that are too mature for a young mind to comprehend. Kids should not watch these shows as they don't understand the complexity of the issues. This includes Pakistani, Indian, as well as American shows. All devices, cable services, even websites have parental controls to limit the viewing of content. Parents can use these tools to control what children can watch, but also talk to them about the importance of watching appropriate shows and videos.

Social media is another significant issue. Young people these days mainly communicate via apps and texts with their friends. However, apps like Instagram and Snapchat are full of celebrities and other people becoming famous by promoting promiscuous lifestyles. These platforms are full of filth and indecent pictures and videos and there is no way to make it safe for children. Young children should not be allowed to use social media at all. As they grow older, they should be taught how to use these apps in a mature and respectful way.

What we need to explain to our children is that our behaviour on the outside impacts our hearts and minds on the inside. What we do, how we talk, our clothing, our actions, all impact our minds. In order for us to live pious lives, we have to clean ourselves from the inside first. That is how we can become closer to Allāh and live under His protection. Do not assume that your children know that dating is not permitted in Islām, and they should avoid it. This is a discussion that must take place when your child's classmates are starting to date, usually around grade 5. Society is promoting dating via all the above-mentioned streams, and young children need to be taught the proper information from their parents, in a easy to understand manner. Open channels of communication will promote dialogue and children will come to ask you questions about what they are seeing, and you can then dispel their misconceptions.

Boys specifically should be taught to respect women and to lower their gaze in their presence. They should also be taught to refrain from looking at inappropriate images of women, be that on TV, video games, or the internet. Explain the importance of lowering their gaze to avoid gawking or staring at women.

The practice of modesty is a constant Jihād these days, and only Allāh can help us to wage this war. We should pray for ourselves and our children on a daily basis in the beautiful words taught by Allāh in the Holy Qur'ān,

"Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes, and make us a model for the righteous." (25:75).

May Allāh accept our humble efforts and protect our children from immodesty, Āmīn!

Modesty in Celebrations

By: Kainat Hameed and Shamama Shafi

Islām has taught us to stay humble in all aspects of life. Whether it be in terms of our individual personality or our celebrations, modesty is always advised and favoured. However, often it is seen that for occasions such as weddings, the principle of modesty is overlooked.

The money being spent on the events that lead up to the wedding day itself is excessive. It not only eludes any teaching of Islām, but also is a strain on the finances of the family. The Mehndi (Henna) ceremony, for instance, is not a religious obligation but its popularity has made it seem like a necessary requirement of marriage. Other examples of overspending include expensive wedding clothes, lavish reception venue, multiple course meal; as well as having bride maids with matching attire, and cake cutting ceremony. So the wedding budget keeps increasing to the point where families might have to take out loans.

Such extravagance is mostly done to please the society, and becomes a form of *shirk* (associating partners with Allāh). It is hard to overcome the cultural pressures, but every Ahmadī should put what Islām advises first and foremost, instead of conforming to the expectations of the society. This is a Jihād that we have to take part in. If a family indulges in extravagant ceremonies in order to make an impression on people, how long will those people remember such efforts made on their parts? Marriage is a sacred institution, which should be established only to gain the pleasure of Allāh. And the best way to see through a marriage ceremony is by looking at the example of the Holy Prophet[sa]. He was humble and modest every time he got married without a hint of exaggeration. If he didn't partake in such extravagances, why should we? Instead of spending so much money on the wedding functions and ceremonies, it is much better to give that same money in the way of Allāh (for example Maryam Shadi fund), and pray for the safe and happy future of the couple getting married.

Islām has not completely forbidden the idea of a celebration, in fact it has encouraged it but we are advised to celebrate in moderation. However, many a people indulge in extravagance when celebrating a wedding, and it has become a cultural obligation even if it is not a religious one. Let us pray that may Allāh enable us to stick to the modest way of life that Islām has taught us.

Announcements | Requests for Prayers

Mrs. Nusrat Mirza Sāhiba of Malton is requesting prayers for her grandson, Taha Zafar Awan, who was born on May 25, 2018. He is the son of Ramla and Usama Awan of USA. The child is also part of the blessed scheme of Waqfe Nau. The newborn is the maternal grandson of Shahid Mirza Sāhib of Malton Jamā'at, and paternal grandson of Zafar Awan Sāhib of USA. Members are requested to pray for the long, healthy life of the child and that he becomes a true servant of Khialfat. May Allāh bless him with a long and healthy life, and make him the delight of his parents' eyes. Amīn!

Blessings of Dressing . . .

Modesty is a quality that distinguishes human beings from animals. From Qur'ānic teachings and the sayings of the Holy Prophet[sa] it is clear that proper dress is an essential element of modesty. There is great wisdom in the Islāmic dress code. An appropriate dress code is required for both women and men. Islām does not put the responsibility of employing modestly entirely on one gender. Both genders are commanded to lower their gaze and guard their chastity.

It is not easy to adopt an Islāmic dress code considering the current pressures placed on women by society to be fashion forward and trendy. In fact, it takes a great amount of conviction to dress modestly and honour God. By doing so, you will be defying society that promotes nudity and vulgarity. You will not fall victim to predatory eyes, while gravitating towards people who share common interests and beliefs. Most importantly, you will be taking an important step towards spiritual growth. With all these blessing who wouldn't at least try to dress up modestly and see what happens.

Sabika Hafeez Ahmad, Surrey South

The First Lady of the United States of America Michelle Obama, and her daughter made headlines in 2017 for wearing a veil when meeting Pope Francis. The Vatican requires that women wear black clothing that covers the shoulders, arms, cleavage, most of the legs. Women must also wear a head covering. Some people appreciated it, while others criticized it and called them hypocrites. But the fact is that high profile people, be it the royals or politicians, men or women – mostly dress modestly in public settings.

Modesty is defined as "the action of behaving or dressing so that you do not show your body or attract sexual attention." In this context, dressing modestly means dressing in a way that does not trigger lustful thoughts. But is modesty in one's conduct not enough? In fact, it is not. We cannot deny that modesty in one's behavior is imperative, but the way one dresses is in reality an outward sign of one's inward decency and modesty. A great responsibility lies on women because Allāh has created women more attractive. The more indecently women dress, the more chances there are of attracting the attention of strange men, leading to sinful relationships or even endangering the life and security of women. Consider the increasing number of divorces, teen pregnancies, runaways, and rapes – destroying and damaging the family unit Allāh created for comfort and fulfillment of natural human desires. It is true that not all men are tempted by looking at a woman dressed immodestly, but that does not mean women should not protect their bodies from the gaze of men. Have you ever heard of a person who keeps his valuables out in the public? Islām teaches us that "tether thy camel first and then leave her to the care of Allāh." (Forty Gems of Beauty, 161)

Modest dressing ultimately leads to righteousness, which should be the fundamental goal of all human existence.

Ayesha Sheraz, Saskatoon North

In an online article for Salon, Lauren Shields[1] writes about her year of modesty. After seeking inspiration from the religious women around her, Lauren decided to cover her hair, arms and legs, and she no longer wore make-up for nine

months. Upon reflecting on these changes, she made some notable observations. First, she realized that dressing modestly resulted in some ignoring her, but she did not care to impress those, who only believed a certain physical look was worth their time, anyway. Second, she noted that she felt invisible until she spoke, and when she did speak, those around her were enamored with her intellect and reason. Third, she talked about becoming visible to a community of women who also felt "trapped" by Western beauty ideals. Last, and perhaps most profound, Lauren learned that her modest physical appearance became a "suit" for her inner-self and that this "suit" could never be bought or sold at the latest stores.

Among the countless benefits of modest dress are the feelings of empowerment women gain as well as spiritual blessings. In every-day media (e.g. magazines, commercials, TV shows), we see women constantly being objectified to sell products, conveying the message that a woman's worth is only based on her physical appearance. Conversely, through modesty, Muslim women choose to emphasize their character, intellect and morals over their physical appearance.

The Promised Messiah[as] noted "physical conditions certainly affect spiritual conditions",[2] reflecting the notion of an interconnectedness between body and soul; changing one will undoubtedly influence the other. In the context of dress, we may draw the conclusion that improving one's physical modesty leads to a furtherance of a modest inner-self. May Allāh enable all of us to consistently improve our modesty, piety, (Āmīn).

References

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2. "Philosophy of Teachings of Islām." Alislam. Accessed March 2018. https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Philosophy-of-Teachings-of-Islām.pdf.

Maria Ejaz Khan, Edmonton West

Hijāb protects women from male harassment. The woman who wears Hijāb attracts less attention of lustful eyes than the woman walking openly. Men view the Hijāb like a sign that says off limits and thus do not approach such women. Muslim women, by and large, have a low chance of being exploited for their femininity and beauty in contrast with other women who are not wearing Hijāb. It shows that no other man has the right to seek pleasure from them as she is blessed for her husband only.

If we understand the wisdom behind Hijāb, Allāh wants to instill a sense of purity between men and women, so He prohibited women from showing their figure or showing off any kind of adornment like wearing perfumes or makeup or high heels that do tinkling sounds and attract other sex's attention. Through these rules, a society is being protected from committing adultery and unlawful marriages. Hijāb represents purity. The women veiling is viewed as an indication of dignity, confidence and purity. It highlights Muslim women as subdued, confident and purewomen. Actually, the Hijāb acts like a screen between modest Muslim women and the world's evil. By wearing Hijāb a woman feels safe, comfortable and confident.

Hubbatul Waheed, Lloydminster

The Blessed Scheme of Waqf ʻĀrdi

Report on Waqf ʻĀrdi, City of Belize, Belize

April 5 – 14, 2018

By: Dr. Fozia Zakaria

Allāh says in the Holy Qur'an:

Say, 'My Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. (Chapter 6;163)

The literal meaning of "Waqf" is to devote some thing for a specific cause, to stand, to stop or to dedicate. The scheme for temporary dedication or 'Waqf 'Ārdi' was first initiated during the time of Khalīfatul-Masīh II, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad[ra] for special activities such as doing three months of 'Waqf' during the *Shuddhi Movement*. This scheme was made permanent during the time of Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh III[rh], and by the Grace of Allāh, still continues to the present day.

Hazrat Khalīfatul-Masīh III[rh] says about Waqf 'Ārdi:

"The main purpose of the 'Waqf 'Ārdi' scheme is that members voluntarily and at their own expense go to remote Jamā'at locations and conduct classes to teach the Holy Qur'an so that those members in turn become examples for the world." (Friday Sermon March 28, 1969)

With the blessing of Almighty Allāh, this humble servant of Islām and Ahmadiyyat was recently asked by respected National Sadr Lajna Imāillāh Canada, Amtul Salam Malik, for a 2-week Waqf 'Ārdi in Belize to assist with the training of Lajna Imāillāh and to participate in other Tablīgh activities. Belize is a newly established Jamā'at, registered in November 2013 through the Tablīgh of two Canadian individuals who completed their Waqf 'Ārdi in Belize. Belize is in Central America, located between Mexico and Guatemala. There are two mission houses in Belize, one in Belize City and the other in Belmopan. The current tajneed of Belize Jamā'at is about 150 which includes approximately 70 Lajna members. By the Grace of Allāh, Belize Jamā'at is blessed with two Missionaries. The Missionary-in-charge, respected Naveed Mangla Sāhib is in Belize City and respected Umar Akbar Sāhib is in Belmopan, the

Belize Mission House

capital of Belize. By the Grace of Allāh, both are working very hard towards the training of new Ahmadīs and propagating Islām, Ahmadiyyat.

During this Waqf 'Ārdi, I was also accompanied by a very dedicated Lajna member, respected Ramla Qureshi Sāhiba, the Regional President, Scarborough Jamā'at. With the grace of Almighty Allāh and the support of Local Missionary-in-charge and Lajna members, we were able to serve Belize Jamā'at and the general public. Alhamdulillah.

The brief report of activities is as follows:

DAY 1: April 06, 2018

Visit to Member of Local Health Ministry

I arrived in Belize on Friday, April 05th at 12 pm. Respected Naveed Mangla Sāhib was at the airport to welcome and receive me. Respected Ramla Qureshi Sāhiba, who had arrived from Toronto for Waqf 'Ārdi a day earlier, greeted me at the mission house along with the local Lajna members of Belize Jamā'at. After offering Friday Prayer at the beautiful mission house, I visited the local hospital with respected Mangla Sāhib to meet with a member of the health ministry. We discussed how my services could be utilized during my short stay in Belize. The application to obtain permit for practicing medicine in Belize had already been submitted some time ago and was in process.

DAY 2: April 07, 2018

Educational Class for Lajna Imāillāh Belize and Sleepover

Every Saturday, educational classes are held for training of local Ahmadī members by the respected Missionaries. Respected Umar Akbar Sāhib brings Ahmadī families from Belmopan, more then a 2-hour drive, to attend these educational classes. On Saturday April 07, a combined program was held which was presided by Respected Missionary-in-charge Sāhib. He presented the summary of a Friday sermon delivered by Huzoor[aa].

Later, Ramla Qureshi Sāhiba and I were introduced to local Lajna and were asked to continue with the class. First, a presentation on the topic of "Dare to Be Me" and then one on "The concept of 'Tahira' in Islām" was discussed. Members were introduced to the concept of ritual bath and steps of ablution. Respected Ramla Qureshi Sāhiba assisted me during these talks.

The delicious lunch prepared by local Lajna gave us an opportunity to mingle with them and to learn about their culture and social issues. Dresses donated by the Canadian Lajna members were distributed among the local members which they graciously accepted.

Open House for Health Concerns: On social media, an open invitation was given to local community members to consult about any female health issues. Local members sought advice about their health issues like headaches, diabetes, hypertension, menstrual irregularities, arthritis and facial acne.

After Maghrib and Isha prayers, we had an opportunity to have an open discussion and answer the questions from local members. The concept of **arranged marriages**, 'mahram and namehram' and **concept of God in Islām** was discussed. Subsequently, local Lajna members participated in putting henna (mehndi) on hands.

DAY 3: April 08, 2018

Lajna picnic to Mayan Ruins

After offering Tahajjud and Fajr prayers, a few

Lajna members decided to have a short nap. Sister Nicole and Sister Kim started preparing for breakfast and lunch for a picnic at the Mayan ruins.

Mayan Ruins - The Mayan Empire evolved around 350 B.C. in the tropical lowlands of Belize and northern Guatemala and reached its pinnacle from 250 A.D. to 900 A.D. The purpose of the picnic was to get along with the local Lajna and especially young girls so we could learn about their local issues and try to resolve them, if possible. Throughout the journey, Ramla Sāhiba and I tried to teach the members Islāmic values.

DAY 4: April 09, 2018

Soup Kitchen

By the Grace of Allāh, we were blessed with the opportunity to prepare lunch (sandwiches, fruit and juice) to distribute among the poor people of the inner city. About 50 unfortunate people were fed through this service.

DAY 5: April 10, 2018

Lecture for Members of LEAP Program

As Belize Jamā'at is blessed with a spacious mission house, space is offered to the local community to organize educational classes for women between the ages of 14-40 years on every Monday and Tuesday morning. LEAP is an American organization that teaches youth various skills such as preparing for job interviews; writing resumes; and finding jobs. Most of the individuals attending these classes were single mothers as young as 14 years old.

Topics covered: During this 2-hour session, we discussed the following topics: personal hygiene, red flags in children's health, common childhood illnesses, sexually transmitted infections and contraception.

Since most of the sisters were coming from local villages early in the morning without breakfast, we served them sandwiches, watermelon and juice for breakfast.

DAY 6: April 11, 2018

Dare to Be Me and Tablīgh Bookstall

After spending time with local Lajna, we learned that wearing Hijāb was not very accepted in the work force. Sister Khadija was terminated from her job as a teacher after she started wearing Hijāb. Similarly, other sisters were precluded from certain jobs offers because of their Hijāb. Belize is a dominant Christian country with the majority practicing Catholics. Considering the challenges in this society, it was decided to have an awareness campaign to introduce the concept of Hijāb. A booth was set up at the busy Swing Bridge, where Ahmadiyya literature and books of Jamā'at Ahmadiyya were displayed. The booth was very successful, and several people showed interest to learn about Islām. Local contact information was provided to the interested members.

Sister Khadija is a local Ahmadī member who accepted Islām and Ahmadiyyat about 5 years ago. Her Tablīgh efforts and strategy to attract people towards Islām and Ahmadiyyat is amazing. May Allāh bless her abundantly for her dedication. Āmīn.

Lecture at Gateway Youth Center

Sister Kim, the local president of Lajna Imāillāh Belize, organized a lecture at a youth center.

About 30 boys and girls ages 14-18 attended this lecture. These young members had dropped out from school and were unable to pursue their education. This center provides them an opportunity to learn technical and other skills. A lecture on the topic of "**Drug and Alcohol Abuse and its Detrimental Effects on Society**" was given, and later awareness about "**Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections**" was raised.

These lectures were very much appreciated and a local teacher requested the slides to be shared for the rest of the classes. A personal hygiene package comprising of note book, pen, toothbrushes and tooth paste were distributed among attendees of the lecture.

Lecture at Ministry of Youth Development, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Youth for the Future is a youth centered agency whose primary responsibility is the empowerment of young people to participate meaningfully in the present and future development of Belize. The Ministry runs various projects and one group focuses on women's health-related issues. They requested a lecture on "Contraception methods" and 15 of their staff members attended the session.

Later, Mr. Middleton, an organizer requested the presentation to be shared with another group member. He contacted local president, Lajna Imāillāh Belize, to arrange a lecture for a youth group run by the local Minister's wife.

Home Visits to Local Lajna and Distribution of Food Hampers

The households of local Ahmadī families were visited in the afternoon. These visits gave them a sense of community at large and members openly shared their social issues. Some concerns were conveyed to Missionary-in-charge Sāhib. The members were grateful for the food hampers as a few of them had lost their jobs or were facing boycotts from family members for accepting Ahmadiyyat. Twenty-five food hampers were distributed, Alhamdulillah.

DAY 7: April 12, 2018

Trip to San Pedro Island with Local Lajna

With the generous offer of respected Missionary-in-charge, a day of relaxation to enjoy the beautiful neighborhood of Belize, the San Pedro Island, was organized. Local Lajna were also invited to join this memorable trip. Respected Umar Akbar Sāhib accompanied us with his wife for safety purposes. Some of the Lajna members were visiting the island for the first time. Shark watching was amazing and everyone enjoyed it.

DAY 8: April 13, 2018

Dare to Be Me and Tablīgh Bookstall

With the permission of Missionary-in-charge Sāhib and considering the interest in the earlier bookstall, another stall was organized at Swing Bridge. Alhamdulillah, we had a very positive response this time again. Two sisters tried Hijāb and several members questioned about Islām and the concept of Hijāb.

DAY 9: April 13, 2018

Sewing Class and Educational Session

At the request of local Lajna, a cutting and sewing session was held for local Lajna to learn how to make an Islāmic veil.

Educational Session

The regular Saturday educational class was held from 11 am to 1:30 pm. Members from Belmopan also joined the class. Respected Umar Akbar Sāhib, missionary Belmopan, presented the summary of the Friday sermon and later started the book Noah's Ark as advised by Huzoor[aa] in his recent Friday Sermon. I was requested to introduce the "The Physical Benefits of Sala'at." Respected Ramla Qureshi Sāhiba taught the common phrases used in the Arabic language and later held a separate teaching session for young Atfal and Nāsirāt.

After Zuhr and `Asr prayer, respected Naveed Mangla Sāhib, Missionary-in-charge Belize, led us in a silent prayer before our departure to Canada.

Dear Sisters - the purpose of this lengthy report of Waqf 'Ārdi is to promote the spirit of Waqf 'Ārdi. As mentioned below in a report of Majlis e Mashawarat 1966, it is the responsibility of all members of Jamā'at.

"There is a great need for temporary dedication ('Waqf 'Ārdi'). A part of the Jamā'at has forgotten that the members are 'Murabbis' (spiritual teachers) themselves and the number of 'Murabbis' even with the slight increase that we have is not sufficient. The Jamā'at thinks that reformation and guidance is the sole responsibility of 'Murabbis', whereas every Ahmadī should attend to this task, and that is why I have drawn the attention of the Jamā'at to the Scheme of 'Waqf 'Ārdi' which provides both spiritual and physical benefits." (Report of Majlis Mushawarat 1966).

Waqf 'Ārdi helps with self-reformation as mentioned:

"The second benefit of the Scheme of 'Waqf 'Ārdi' is that the people proceeding on this Scheme are enabled to examine their weaknesses before they leave and thus are provided with an opportunity to pray for the removal of those weaknesses. They are thus prepared for 'Waqf 'Ārdi' by gaining more knowledge of the faith through reading religious literature that they intend to take with them. They are motivated to become examples for the people they are getting ready to visit. The groups of 'Waqf 'Ārdi' have benefited greatly from the blessings of prayer."

(Friday Sermon Al Fazl 12th February 1977)

May Allāh enable us to dedicate time and spirit for this noble cause. Āmīn.

Reports of Local Events

Report of Alberta Regional Ijtimā'

By the grace of Allāh the Almighty, the second annual Regional Ijtimā' for Alberta Region was held on June 23 and 24 at Baitul Hadi Mosque in Edmonton, Alberta. The delegation from Markaz included respected National President Amatul Salaam Malik Sāhiba, National Secretary Talim Amtul Qudoos Farhat Sāhiba, and Muawana Sadar Wasiyat and Incharge Talimul Qur'ān classes Amtul Rafiq Zafar Sāhiba.

DAY 1: Lajna Imailla Ijtimā'

Respected National Talim Secretary gave a special presentation on the topic of "Linking ourselves with Khilāfat." The presentation was followed by a question-answer session. After prize distribution, closing address was delivered by Respected National President in which she highlighted the blessings of Khilāfat and the importance of staying connected to it. The day concluded with Nusrat Jehan Sports. In attendance were approximately 173 Lajna and Nāsirāt from Edmonton East, Edmonton West, Lloydminster, Fort McMurray and Airdrie.

The program included various video clips about the establishment of Khilāfat and memorable moments with Khulafas taken from MTA. The Lajna competitions included Tilawat, Hifz-e-Qur'ān, English Speech, English extempore speech, Urdu Speech, Urdu Extempore Speech, and Poem.

DAY 2: Nasiratul Ahmadiyya Ijtimā'

In attendance were approximately 166 Nāsirāt and Lajna from Edmonton East, Edmonton West, Lloydminster, Fort McMurray and Airdrie. The theme of the Ijtimā' was "Obedience to Khilāfat."

The program included video clips from Nāsirāt Alberta expressing their love for Hazoor^{aa} and memorable moments with Khulafas.

The Nāsirāt competitions included Tilawat, Hifz-e- Qur'ān. Urdu Speech, English Speech, French Speech, Poem, Qaseeda, special reading, and special writing competitions. Nāsirāt participants arrived fully prepared and mothers showed great support for all participants. The Bristol boards of all participants were displayed the same day. The prizes were distributed by Respected National Sadar Sāhiba. Nāsirāt who completed reading the Holy Qur'ān in the month of Ramadan were awarded prizes. Closing remarks were delivered by Respected National President. The day concluded with a students class with Respected National Sadar Sāhiba and Respected Amtul Qudoos Farhat Sāhiba. The total attendance of students was 22.

Delta Heritage Fair 2018, B.C.

By the grace of Allāh, the Almighty, our Jamā'at was given the opportunity to hold a booth at the 2018 Delta Regional Heritage Fair on April 27 and 28. The theme of our booth was "Love for one's country is part of faith" and "Status of Women in Islām". With the help of many Lajna members and two Nāsirāt, we were able to successfully organize this booth for two days.

On April 27, our booth was set up outside the building, while on Saturday, April 28, the booth was set up inside the building.

Many visitors enquired about our community and asked for location of the Mosque. One Muslim lady approached to learn about Holy Qur'ān, while one lady wanted to send her kids to our Mosque (for Holy Qur'ān classes). Positive feedback was received, teachers and students were rushed at our booth and received exciting prizes along with flyers/books of our Jamā'at. Alhamdulillāh! It was a successful event of the year. In short:

- Muslim Culture and Heritage tables were set up to display what Muslim people wear and celebrate.
- Bookstall displayed the books of Jamā'at, Holy Qur'ān, books on "Peace", "Women in Islām", "Invitation to Ahmadiyyat" and many other Pamphlets.
- 70 flyers were given out on "Muslim Festivals" which described better understanding of "blessed month of Ramadan" and "Eid-ul-Adha".
- A table was setup on "Fill a Quiz Get a prize" which promoted why Islām is peaceful religion.
- Two large banners on "Status of Women in Islām" and on "Holy Qur'ān" displayed for visitors to read and learn .

For two days, interesting and interactive activities were held (for over one hundred students) which included 'Mugs decoration' with Quotes on Worldwide Peace, henna stall and free brochures. It was a successful event, *Allhamdulillah.*

Annual International Women's Day Exhibition

By the grace of Allāh the Almighty, Lajna Imā'Illah Halqa Calgary NW was able to organize its Annual International Women's Day Exhibition. The event was held on Saturday March 3rd, 2018 at the VIVO recreational center.

The Exhibition was held in the main lobby of the VIVO recreational center. Lajna also had many informative stalls on display as well, which promoted the awareness about Ahmadiyya Muslim Women in Islām. This included displays on:

- the achievements of Ahmadī women and the volunteer work organized by the Lajna- such as volunteering at the food bank and at events such as Run for Calgary;
- a setup on women in Islām which contained several books promoting the strong history of women in Islām and their achievements;
- a stall on the concept of the Hijāb, which had an informative poster on the purpose and origins of the Hijāb. This stall also offered others to try a Hijāb on, as scarves were put on display.
- Humanity First stall – which outlined projects Humanity First is involved in such
- and free nail art and henna stall, where many people came by.

The Exhibition also included informative posters, books, and displays of the Holy Qur'ān and its various translations. Complimentary snacks and tea for guests was also provided. This Exhibition also displayed clips on Ahmadiyyat and Baitun-Nur mosque.

May Allāh accept our humble efforts, produce far reaching results and reward all the volunteers the best for their selfless efforts, Āmīn.

Nāsirāt Corner

ABDUS SALAM SCEINCE FAIR

Mahrosh Javed (age 8 yrs), Airdrie, Alberta

Abdus Salam science fair is an annual event organized by the Jamā'at in honour of Professor Dr. Abdus Salam. Dr. Sāhib was a theoretical physicist and the first Muslim scientist who won a Nobel Prize in 1979. Dr. Abdus Salam proved that Islām and Science can, not only co-exist, but also complement each other.

I was very excited for this year's Science fair, as I enjoy Science and since I was 4 years old, I have wanted to be a Dentist! I had lots of ideas for my first ever entry into a Science fair. After a lot of thought, I decided to call my science project: '**THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK**'.

I wanted to find out which drink is healthiest and why, and which drinks are not healthy and why? As I began to do research on my project, I was continuously learning new things and some very interesting facts about sugar and the harmful effects of it. After completing my project, I not only gained a lot of knowledge about my chosen subject but I improved my creative skills, by making my tri-fold poster for the judges as appealing as I could. My presentation skills improved by presenting my project to the judges in confidence. By the Grace of Allāh, I received 2nd prize for my Science project.

I want to recommend to any Nasira, if you haven't yet participated in the Abdus Salam Science fair, you should, it's a great learning experience and a lot of fun!

Celebrating Canada Day as an Ahmadī Muslim

In reaction to The Edmonton Journal's article about our community's Canada Day celebrations (https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/canada-day-celebrations-in-edmonton), the Nāsirāt were asked to write a response letter. Below is a compilation of their memorable responses:

"Canada Day is important to me because we can help the poor and give money to food banks. It reminds me of Remembrance Day, when people stand for us and the poor, and that is why I am happy to be Canadian!"

Ayesha Bajwa, 8 years old

"Canada Day is important to me because we help the poor. We sometimes go to food banks and donate money. That is why I am grateful to be a Canadian."

Adan Raees, 9 years old

"I am truly grateful to be a Canadian because we all have a great quality of life. In Canada, the government takes care of the poor, and we all have freedom and peace. We are not forced to do stuff, and we are nice to each other."

Eshal Majid, 9 years old

"Canada Day is actually more than just about having fun. It is about being thankful to our country. This thought should not be just for Muslims, it should be for everyone. I love being a Canadian and living in such a peaceful country. We should also support charities to help the homeless. A little contribution makes a big difference for the people in need."

Kashifa Malik, 10 years old

"Some countries, like Pakistan, do not allow people to be Ahmadī Muslims. In Canada, it is a different situation. In Canada, people are allowed to follow their religions. No one can stop them or mistreat them because of their religion.

(Continued on the next page)

Islāmic Word Search

The Islāmic name of God is 'Allāh'. This name refers to the One Supreme Being. In Islām, an essential belief is in the oneness of Allāh. Along with the name 'Allāh', Allāh has many beautiful names, signifying His various attributes. There are 99 Names of Allāh! See if you can find some attributes of Allāh in this fun word search!

Names of Allah

Y	Y	T	O	N	A	I	D	R	A	U	G	M	P	D	GRACIOUS
Z	W	E	Q	B	W	R	O	T	C	E	T	O	R	P	MERCIFUL
M	Y	Z	C	G	I	Z	U	Y	A	R	C	U	U	P	PROTECTOR
N	T	U	V	S	I	C	I	T	U	F	R	E	N	Q	JUST
X	H	L	B	M	P	K	J	T	T	R	E	R	M	Y	LOVING
T	G	Q	U	X	B	U	H	C	N	I	A	U	H	G	LIGHT
T	I	Y	W	F	S	S	K	C	W	E	T	U	Q	R	HEALER
W	M	H	M	T	I	W	C	E	G	N	O	H	S	A	FRIEND
I	R	K	Y	T	L	C	D	R	B	D	R	I	W	C	WISE
S	L	E	H	F	U	T	R	G	J	E	G	H	T	I	MIGHTY
E	R	G	L	R	M	P	U	E	N	G	N	Z	B	O	CREATOR
N	I	I	C	A	H	L	T	G	M	I	Z	Y	H	U	ONE
L	S	G	K	T	E	R	C	Q	O	E	V	G	F	S	GUARDIAN
F	V	E	B	S	N	H	M	U	Y	R	X	O	P	K	MAKER
L	R	Q	K	L	O	G	B	A	A	Q	H	P	L	X	TRUTH

Submitted by: Irum Mahmood, Vaughan North

(Continued from previous page)

People are allowed to wear scarves and they are allowed to wear burqas, so they are free! As an Ahmadī Muslim, I am glad that I am Canadian and that I celebrate Canada Day."

Amtul Aleem, 10 years old

"I am happy to be Canadian, but some Canadians do not have food or shelter. For Canada Day, I would love to donate some food and new clothes. I want to donate some items to the homeless because I want them to feel as special as we all do. I want them to know that they are not alone. They should also know what Canada Day feels like."

Faiqa Ahmad, 11 years old

"On July 1, 2018, I attended the Canada Day celebration at my mosque, Bait-ul-Hadi. After singing, 'Oh Canada', my fellow nasirat presented a speech on why she was proud to be Canadian. Later on, a speech was presented about Run for Edmonton, a 5k or 10k walk or run, where all the proceeds go to the food bank. This was an example of being Canadian. When people think about Canada, they usually think of superficial characteristics; maple syrup, igloos, and always saying sorry. Canadians are much more than that, Canada is much more than that. Canada is a diverse and welcoming country, with diverse and welcoming people."

Mariam Agyemang, 12 years old

"Being a Canadian can mean a variety of things. How we act and how we contribute to communities are few of the many things that make us Canadians shine throughout the world. As Canadian Muslims, loving our country is part of our faith. It represents who we are and what Canada means to us. We have taken part in many Canadian organizations, such as the Food Bank and even celebrating Canada Day. Participating in these events shows how proud we are to be Canadians and that we continue to thrive to make our Muslim community a significant part of our country"

Zoya Mahmood, 14 years old